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Names and Places

[The editors will welcome as contributions to this section of *Western Folklore* articles or brief notes concerned with Western place names or inquiries calling for information about them. Contributions may be sent directly to the editor, Professor T. M. Pearce, University of New Mexico, Albuquerque, N.M.]

PLACE NAMING IN THE WAILAKI COUNTRY*

FRANK M. ASBILL

WHEN THE MISSOURIANS Pierce and Frank Asbill with Jim Naphus first entered the wilderness in southern Mendocino County, California, in 1854, the first place they named was Eden Valley. On the thirteenth of May of that year the Asbill party camped on top of a great unnamed mountain, in a high plateau-like valley. After camp was made, Pierce remarked that the valley put him "hin mind hof some sort hof a valley" he had "heard erbout hin some sort hof a book." None of the party knew anything about any sort of books, for none could read their own name. There was about only one book they had ever seen, and that was the Bible. So Frank Asbill asked his brother "if'n hit war thay lettle black book" that their "mother had their names hin." Pierce said, "Thats her, by gad! Then it must of been the Valley of Eden." And Pierce named it Eden Valley, and it still bears that name. Next morning, leaving the new-found valley and traveling down the east side of the great mountain, Pierce remarked that the mountain put him "hin mind hof a mountin hin Missori," and that there is a mountain in Missouri bearing the name Sanhedrin. Pierce named the mountain Sanhedrin. Eden Valley lies on top of Sanhedrin Mountain.

These pioneers bestowed other names in this region, some of which are forgotten, while others are still very much alive. An opportunity to name physical features in other sections of the Round Valley district came a few years later when the settlers banded together in pursuit of the Wailaki Indians who had killed the Sprowell brothers.

* This article was received by Professor Erwin G. Gudde after he had finished the manuscript of *California Place Names*, recently published by the University of California Press. The Pierce and Frank Asbill mentioned were father and uncle, respectively, of the author of the article. The name of the Indian group is spelled in various ways. The author spelled it Wylacky, but Wailaki is the form used most frequently by ethnologists. The term is applied to "those Indians of the Athapaskan stock who occupied the valley of the North Fork and the valley of the main Eel river below (northward) from Round valley, Mendocino county, to Kikawaka creek in Humboldt county" (P.E. Goddard, "The Habitat of the Wailaki," *U. C. Pub. in Am. Arch. and Eth.* [Berkeley, 1923], XX, 95).

Three miles up the South Fork of the Eel River from Garberville, a mountain tributary named Sprowell Creek derived its name from the Sprowell brothers, two of the earliest settlers to locate in that part of the country. The last remaining wild Indians, who were Wailaki, massacred them, in the middle 'sixties. After murdering the two brothers they killed their two milk cows, which wore bells. The Indians took the bells as trinkets, never before having seen anything like them, and the bells were the cause of their undoing—their annihilation. At that early date, in that vast mountainous wilderness the only white men were a few, mostly uneducated, mountain men, most of whom were squaw men, or were becoming so; and they were the ones who ran down, captured, and killed the band of Wailaki that had murdered the two Sprowell brothers. Their names were Pierce and Frank Asbill, Jim Naphus, B. M. Cox, Bill Woods, Cap Hardin, Jim Graham, and a man named Duncan. They discovered the Indians near the site of the present town of Briceland, which is nine miles by wagon road and three miles by air line straight west of Garberville. (Briceland derived its name from John Briceland, a squaw man, along in the 'seventies.)

The Wailaki, after being jumped, started back toward the Round Valley locality, about fifty miles southeast over the then unnamed mountains. At the present location of Benbow, now on the Redwood Highway, just at the site of Marshall Hale's summer home, Cap Hardin was shot in the belly by an Indian flint-ended arrow. A buckle he wore saved his life. Cap had to quit the Indian trailing, so he went back to the place where Jake Garber's little store was later built. The horses were there, and Cap was directed by the other mountain men to take the stock back about twenty-five miles straight east to a large red-topped peak, which then had no name. The others followed the Wailaki band, mostly by the tinkle of the cowbells. The Wailaki left the South Fork at the present location of Hartsook's summer resort, and going up over Reed Mountain (then unnamed—it derived its name from Reuben Reed, who was also a squaw man), from there the Wailaki traveled straight south over what later was named Red Mountain because oxide of iron had made it red in color. The red formation, which was about a mile and a half long and a mile wide, extended as far as the highest mountain in the Coast Range except the Yolla Bolly Mountain, which at that time was just about the only thing named in that wilderness. The Wailaki Indians gave it the name, which means Snowy Mountain. From the red oxide-of-iron mountain the Indians took to another high mountain for about six miles and stopped at a very large mountain spring that ran out from the roots of a large tree. When the mountain men arrived at the spring, Jim Graham went to get a drink and picked up the two cowbells that not long before had been worn by the two milk cows of the two Sprowell brothers. Jim, said, "Wall hi reckon we-ons will call her Bell Spring." And

today, on county, state, and government maps it is Bell Spring. The mountain derived its name from the same source, as did also Bell Spring Canyon, the spring being part of the headwaters of the canyon. Bell Spring Mountain is the highest part of the Coast Range, it being, I think, 3,000 feet in elevation at what is called Chitten's Mailbox, three miles south of Bell Spring. From the bell location, the Wailaki were followed into what later became named the Big Chemise, which derived its name from the low, scrubby chamise brush. Here grow hazel, madrone, white and black oak, and scattering fir timber, among rocky points and slides, in a vast piece of country which is still a no man's land, it being so worthless. It is about three miles square, with a mountain tributary of the main Eel River running through its middle.

Upon entering the vast chamise country, the mountain men split up, some going direct through the center, while Jim Naphus, Duncan, and others went round the head of the creek that ran through the Big Chemise. They all met on top of the adjoining mountain, which at that time was also unnamed. Straight east from the new-found spring, while on their trip round the head of the new creek, they had discovered that on a small, narrow backbone formation a spring came out on each side. The springs were only a few yards apart, one running south, the other straight north. From the directions of the two tributaries the mountain men knew they both emptied into the main Eel River, to the east; so that day the mountain was named Island Mountain. All of this locality was in Mendocino County, California. At the Hartsook's resort location, where the Island Mountain was named, the men were about four hundred yards from the corner post and boundary lines of Humboldt, Mendocino, and Trinity counties.

From the Island Mountain the mountain men traveled north, crossing the creek that ran through the Big Chemise to empty into the main Eel River. At the crossing they named the new creek Chemise Creek, and it still bears that name.

From Chemise Creek they traveled on still north, over another mountain which adjoins Island Mountain on the north, and on the other side of the new mountain they came to another creek running in the same direction as Chemise Creek. There they camped over night. Jim Naphus, picking up two corncob pipes, which had been taken from the Sprowell brothers and left there by the Wailaki, said, "By Gad! Hi reckon we-ons 'll call this Pipe Creek"—and it still is Pipe Creek.

From Pipe Creek they traveled straight east about four miles and went round a great red peak to meet Cap Hardin on the other side. Cap was there with the horses. Jim Naphus went up on the red peak—its color was caused by the same thing as Red Mountain, the red oxide of iron—and found that the peak was covered with low chamise, manzanita and madrone, and white oak

and black oak timber. When Jim got back to camp the others asked him what he had found, Jim said, "Thay most wo'thless piece of kent'ry hi ever see'd." Jim was covered with the red, dusty dirt; his whiskers and hair, instead of being the color of an Airedale dog, was streaked and red. Jim said, "Hi ham goin' ter name hit Naphus' Peak"—and it still is Naphus's Peak.

This was the last place named on that expedition. The murderers of the Sprowell brothers were caught soon afterward, and the settlers returned to their homes.

THE MEANING OF THE NAME ALBUQUERQUE

L. B. MITCHELL

ALBUQUERQUE appears to have been originally a place name in a region which was controlled for centuries by the Moors and in which are found several place names which are of Arabic origin, such as Albarragena, Alcántara, Arranches, Assumar, Almorchan, etc. A town bearing the name of Alburquerque (formerly in Portugal) is situated in the province of Badajoz, Spain, about ten miles east of the Portuguese border. The Moors held this region from the eighth century until Fernando II expelled them in 1166. The title of Duke of Alburquerque was first granted by Enrique IV to Beltrán de la Cueva in 1464, and in his children and descendants this dukedom has continued. The eighth duke, Don Francisco Fernandes de la Cueva Enríquez, was the thirty-fourth Viceroy of New Spain, and it was while he was resident in Mexico City that the villa in New Mexico was founded. Although the name appears as a family name and in the title to the dukedom, it should be remembered that Alburquerque was the name of the town before it was applied to the family and dukedom.¹

The official account of the founding of the town in New Mexico is in the records of the acts of Governor Don Francisco Cuervo y Valdez, and clearly states that in the early part of 1706 Cuervo founded the Villa of Alburquerque, giving to it the name San Francisco de Alburquerque (the writer had trouble with the spelling, but got it right next time, for he knew how to spell the Duke's name), in honor of the Viceroy of New Spain. He established there thirty-five families of neighboring Spaniards from the banks of the Rio [Grande] del Norte. The church, in uninterrupted use to the present time, must have been built at once, for in his report in June mentioning the establishment of the settlement, the Governor asked for a chalice and other church equipment. On July 18 Cuervo was reprimanded for having founded the town without permission of the viceroy, and since Felipe V had already issued authorization to found a villa bearing his name, Cuervo was ordered to add the

¹ Pascual Madoz, *Diccionario Geográfico-Estadístico-Histórico de España y sus posesiones de ultramar* (Madrid, 1845), I, 349-350.